

CONFEDERATE PRESIDENT VINDICATED NOW

WAS HERO IN TWO WARS

(Continued from Fourth Page.)

While in New Orleans, on his way home, Colonel Davis was offered by President Polk a commission as brigadier-general of volunteers, an honor which he unhesitatingly declined on the ground that no such commission could be conferred by Federal authority or by any Congress. He considered it to be an infraction of the rights of the State to which respectively the Constitution reserves the appointment of officers of the militia.

As a Member of the Senate, Secretary Davis was in the capital since his return to Mississippi when Colonel Davis was appointed in August, 1847, by the Governor of the State to fill the vacancy in the United States Senate occasioned by the death of General Speight. At the ensuing session of the Legislature the reelection of Mr. Davis as Senator was on January 11, 1848, confirmed by his unanimous election for the remainder of the unexpired term. It was the grateful tribute of popular appreciation to the hero who had risked his life for the glory of the country, and the worthy recognition of abilities which had been proven adequate to the responsibilities of highest civil trust. The entire period of his service in the Senate from 1847 to 1851, and from 1857 to 1861, comprises about eight years, but these were years of momentous interest to the American people.

The settlement known by the way of distinction as the "Compromise of 1850" averting for the time the dangers of disunion and civil war, met the approval of the advocates of expediency, but was opposed with heroic pertinacity by Mr. Davis and his associates of the States' Rights party. They saw the hollowness of its pretended justice, its utter worthlessness as a guarantee to the South, and sought to defeat it—first in Congress and afterwards by the popular voice. But the sentiment of attachment to the Union triumphed over every consideration of interest, principle, even security, and the measure succeeded.

Jefferson Davis was never a disunionist. His action at all times had been consistent with his declared opinions, and with the earnest attachment to the Union declared in his congressional speeches and his public addresses everywhere. During the campaign of 1852, Mr. Davis made a canvass in Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana for General Franklin Pierce, with whom he held the most friendly relations, and in whose constitutional opinions he fully and ardently concurred. His support of the Baltimore platform was quite as consistent as his support of the nominee. General Pierce, when elected President, indicated his estimate of Davis by a prompt tender of a Cabinet position, which was reluctantly declined. Mr. Davis, however, then requested him to be present at his inauguration, and when he reached Washington the offer of a Cabinet place was repeated. The obvious advantage of representation in the government of the States' Rights party, an argument earnestly urged upon him by prominent Southern statesmen, and he accepted the position of Secretary of War.

As Secretary of War, Mr. Davis was, of course, identified with the policy of the administration, of which William L. Marcy was Premier, and Caleb Cushing the Attorney-General. Secretary Davis occupied a position worthy of his abilities and peculiarly gratifying to his military tastes. He made many recommendations, contemplating radical alterations in the military system of the country, one of the first being a recommendation for the thorough revision of the army regulations.

During the Crimean War, Secretary Davis sent a commission, in which Captain McClellan afterwards a major general, was a member, to the Crimea, to study and report upon the science of war and the conditions of European armies as illustrated in the operations incident to that struggle. The presidential term of Pierce expired on the 4th of March, 1857, and with it terminated the connection of Mr. Davis with the executive branch of the government. Shortly before that time he was elected by the Legislature of Mississippi to the United States Senate for the term beginning March 4, 1857, and expiring in 1859.

During the Thirty-ninth Congress, which assembled in December, 1859, Mr. Davis was the recognized leader of the Democratic majority in the Senate. His efforts were during this session probably the ablest of his life, and never did his great powers of analysis and generalization appear to greater advantage.

Showing South's Position. On the 23d day of February, 1860, Mr. Davis offered a series of seven resolutions, which embodied the views of the administration, of an overwhelming majority of the Democratic members of the Senate, and were opposed by Mr. Douglas, Mr. Pugh and by the abolition Senators.

The first resolution affirmed the sovereignty of the States, and their delegation of authority to the Federal Government, to secure each State against domestic, no less than foreign, dangers. This resolution was designated with special reference to the recent outrages of John Brown and his associate conspirators, several of whom had explained their crimes on the grounds at the hands of the Virginia authorities.

Resolution second affirmed the recognition of slavery as property by the Constitution, and that all efforts to injure it by citizens of non-slaveholding States were violations of faith.

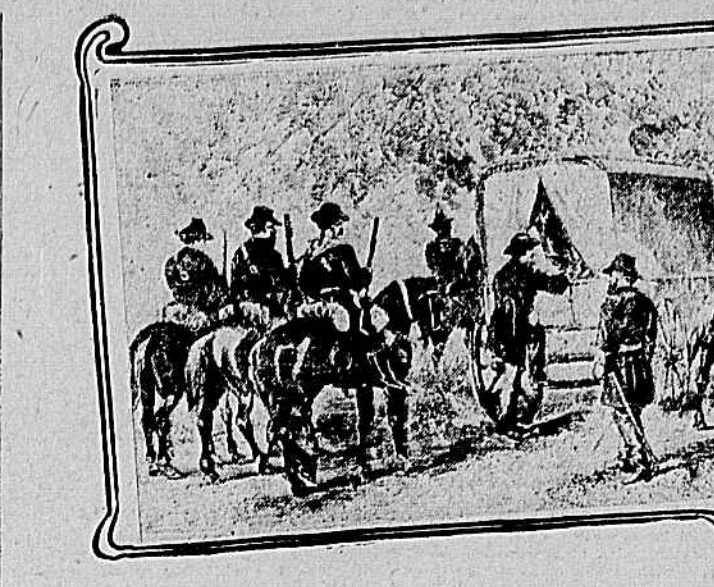
Third, insistent on the absolute equality of the States. Fourth, "Resolved, That neither Congress nor a territorial legislature, whether by direct legislation or legislation of an indirect and unfriendly character, possesses power to amend or impair the constitutional right of any citizen of the United States to take his slave property into the common Territories, and there hold and enjoy the same while the territorial condition remains."

Fifth, declared it the duty of Congress to supply any needed protection to constitutional rights in a Territory, provided the executive and judicial authority has not the adequate means.

The sixth resolution was simply an emphatic repudiation of what Mr. Douglas, by an ingenious perversion of terms, was pleased to designate "popular sovereignty."

The seventh and last of the series affirmed the validity and sanctity of the fugitive slave law, and denounced all acts, whether of individuals or of State Legislatures, to defeat this action.

The struggles upon these resolutions lasted more than three months, the Senate not reaching a vote upon the first of the series until May 24, 1860. They constituted substantially the platform presented by the South at the



Mr. Davis on his way to Fort Mifflin, entering an ambulance near the scene of his arrest.—From a sketch made by one of his captors.

Charleston Democratic Convention in April, and upon which after the withdrawal of the Southern delegations, the presidential ticket of Breckinridge and Lane was nominated, and supported at the ensuing canvass, resulting in the electoral votes of eleven States of the South.

Effect of Lincoln's Election. The disruption of the Democratic party, as had inevitably been foreseen, was followed by the election of Abraham Lincoln in November, 1860, as President of the United States.

Mr. Davis was a firm believer in absolute sovereignty of the States, and of the enjoyment by the States of all the attributes of sovereignty, including necessarily the right of secession. He had never urged the expediency of secession, though upon repeated occasions he had forewarned its probable necessity in the future as the only remedy remaining to the South in certain contingencies. Yet this course was entirely directed in the interest of moderation. Regarding a long and bloody war a certain result of dissolution, he anxiously sought to avert it, and stood pledged to any basis of settlement which should guarantee the safety and honor of the South. At no time, however, did he advocate submission.

After the failure of the Crittenden compromise, which for a time promised a satisfactory basis of settlement, Mr. Davis remained in the Senate a champion of peace, and until the last moment of adjustment when he received the summons of Mississippi, forbidding the longer exercise of the trust which she had given to his keeping. The State seceded on the 9th of January, 1861. Mr. Davis, receiving formal announcement of the event, withdrew on the 21st. His farewell address to the Senate is well known as one of the most impressive and eloquent valedictories ever listened to. Its dignified, courteous and statesmanlike character had challenged the unqualified eulogy of the enlightened world. Mr. Davis returned within a few days to his residence in Mississippi. The State was not unmindful of the necessity of a declaration for a war, which was extremely probable, and Mr. Davis was at once honored by the appointment to the command of the State militia, with the rank of major-general.

Confederate States of America. Before, however, he could assume the new responsibilities which the State had placed upon him, the voice of millions invoked his guidance of their destinies in the hazardous experiment of independent national existence. Secession was rapid in its progress. Representatives of the Southern States met in convention at Montgomery, Ala., on the 4th of February, 1862, for the purpose of forming a provisional government. On the 8th of February this body adopted a Constitution and proclaimed an addition to the family of nations under the title of "The Confederate States of America." The next day the Congress announced its choice of the two highest constitutional officers of the new government; President, Jefferson Davis, of Mississippi; Vice-President, Alex. H. Stephens, of Georgia.

There can be no doubt that in this selection of the President of the Confederacy the new Congress ratified the previous choice of the South, who almost unanimously regarded Mr. Davis as the man best fitted for the position by ability, character, and political and military experience. The new government in the incidents attending its constitution and setting in operation fully vindicated the earnest and conscientious convictions of the people who called it into existence.

Along the route to Montgomery, Mr. Davis was greeted with every possible demonstration of patriotic enthusiasm and personal regard. Arriving there he was inaugurated with a simplicity of ceremony, an absence of personal inflation, and a degree of popular joy, which well befitted the formal assertion of true Republican liberty, equally protected against the license of mobs and the usurpation of tyrants.

War Proclamations. President Lincoln's proclamation of war against the seceded States was issued April 15th, within forty-eight hours after the intelligence of the bloodless artillery duel at Sumter had been flashed over the country.

The war proclamation and the call for 75,000 men to coerce the Cotton States brought Virginia into hearty sympathy with the Confederacy. She assumed the robe of leadership and sprang for those immortal principles of which her soil was the nursery, and her illustrious sons the champions. Virginia seceded April 24, 1861, joining the Confederacy the succeeding May 6th.

The proclamation of President Lincoln declaring war upon the Confederate States was promptly responded to by President Davis. He at once called upon the various States for quotas of volunteers for the public defense. By public proclamation he invited applications for privateering service, in which armed vessels might assist in the public defense on the high seas under letters of marque and reprisal granted by Congress. President Davis appreciated the immense value to the South of privateers.

Transferred to Richmond. Transferring the seat of the Confederate government to Richmond shortly after the secession of Virginia, the city presented to the government the handsome old Crenshaw residence, at the corner of Twelfth and Clay Streets, as the "White House of the Confederacy" while the sessions of the Confederate Congress were held in the Virginia State Capitol, the various departments of the new government being scattered in nearby buildings.

Warned while at worship in St. Paul's Church of the evacuation of Petersburg army for the first time since the evacuation of Petersburg. On April 8th General Lee surrendered an army comprising 7,892 men to General Grant, who had on the field a force of 162,231 officers and men.

and that Lee's army could no longer hold the lines around Richmond. Mr. Davis was forced to retire with the members of his Cabinet.

Following the surrender of the armies of Lee and Johnston, Mr. Davis was captured at Irwinville, Ga., while en route with his family to the coast of Florida.

He was taken to Fort Monroe, where for two years he was imprisoned under the most humiliating circumstances without trial and denied the writ of habeas corpus. At the end of his long imprisonment he was brought before a Federal grand jury in Richmond and indicted. Chief Justice Chase directing that the prisoner should be granted bail. Prominent men in both political parties, including Horace Greeley, Commodore Vanderbilt and others, went on the bond. Released in May, 1867, he went to Canada, where he was joined by his family, obeying summonses from time to time to come before the Federal court in Richmond, until finally the case was heard before Chief Justice Chase and District Judge Underwood. The judges dividing in opinion, the proceedings were finally quashed without a final decision. After a year of life in England, Mr. Davis accepted the presidency of an insurance company with headquarters in Memphis, Tenn., later retiring to his home in Mississippi, where he devoted himself to literary work, producing several volumes on Confederate history.

Jefferson Davis' Birthplace, at Fairview, Ky.

Arrival of Jefferson Davis in Richmond, May 11, 1867, under military guard. Jefferson Davis brought before the United States Circuit Court, Richmond, May 13, 1867, on a writ of habeas corpus.

Camp, men hurrying to and from without uniforms and without arms, while half-furnished militia from Southern States were rushing to the front. Military necessities, the organization of armies of defense, steps for a nucleus of a navy, financial problems, problems of subsistence, complicated the questions of establishing the departments of the new government. Mr. Davis found General Robert E. Lee commanding the Virginia troops, while General Joseph E. Johnston was the ranking military officer in the South. By prodigious exertions an army was made ready for the successful encounter with the Federal army at Manassas on July 21st, a speed in organization and mobilization of troops which breaks all records.

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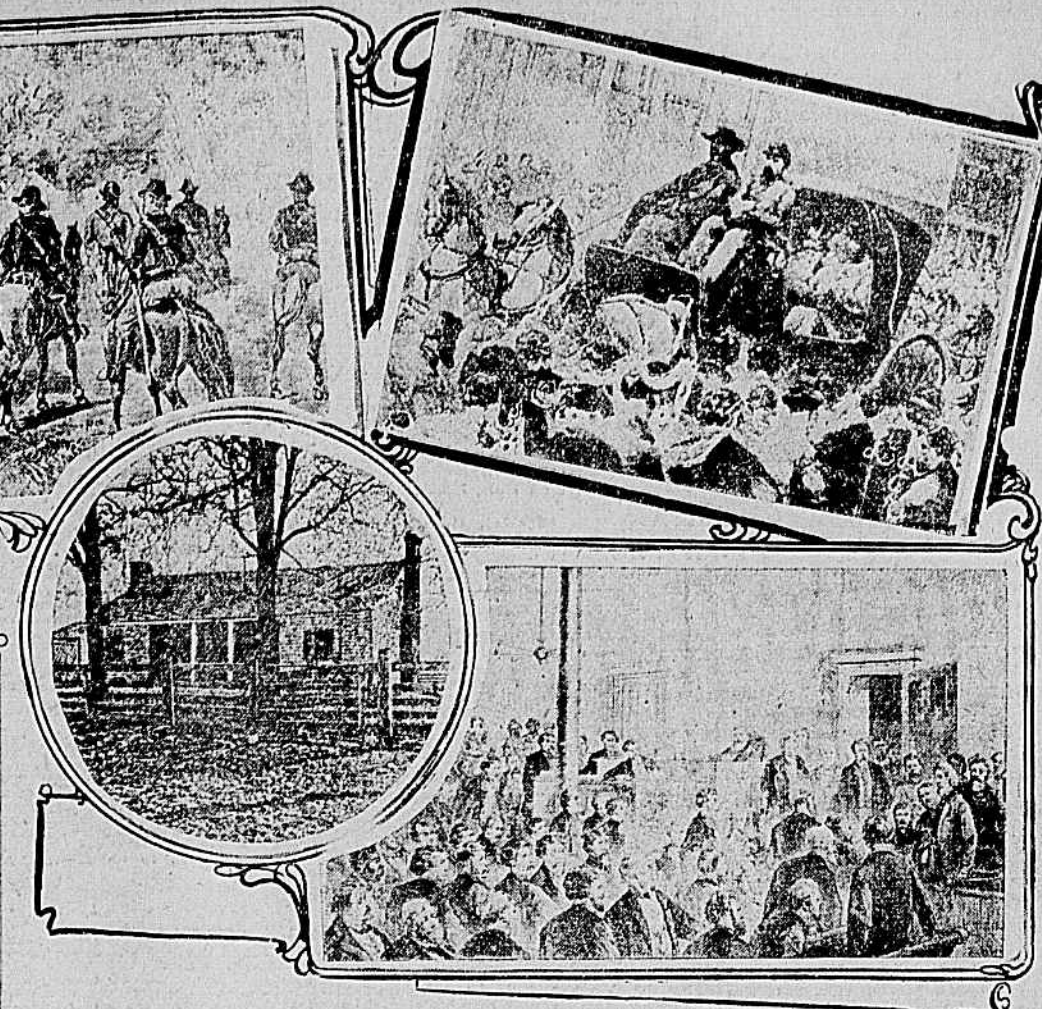
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